

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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May 1, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

I write today to ask for your support of my legislation to protect Plum Island, the federally-owned island off the eastern end of Long Island. My Plum Island National Monument Act aims to permanently protect the island.

Alternatively, I request you designate the island as a national monument through the authority vested in you in the Antiquities Act of 1906 which authorizes the President to establish national monuments on federal lands. This legislation has been used to protect natural and historical sites for all Americans to enjoy.

Government officials and organizations have been working towards the preservation and protection of Plum Island for more than a decade. Plum Island was home to Native American tribes prior to the construction of a lighthouse and Army post in the 19th century. In 1954, a federal research facility was established on the island, which has since undergone relocation efforts.<sup>1</sup> In 2008, Plum Island was slated to be sold to the highest bidder, but the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (PL 116-260) removed the island from the auction block.<sup>2</sup>

The designation of Plum Island as a national monument provides us with a chance to work together to permanently protect this uniquely historic island, home to hundreds of species and undisturbed biodiversity. Living on the 822 acres of Plum Island, there are 228 bird species, including many that are federally endangered or threatened. The island provides a stopover habitat for many bird species that migrate in the fall.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the island is home to rare plant species that live on the various beach, wetland, and forest habitats. The Plum Island lighthouse and remains of Fort Terry located on the island also serve as historic resources from the Spanish-American War and World Wars I and II.

Again, I strongly urge you to designate Plum Island as a national monument to protect its cultural history and natural resources. If action is taken, Plum Island can be used for recreation activities for the people of New York and Connecticut, and the valuable biodiversity on the island can be federally preserved.

Very respectfully,

  
Nick LaLota  
Member of Congress

<sup>1</sup><https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/new-york/stories-in-new-york/saving-plum-island/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.preserveplumisland.org>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.preserveplumisland.org/fauna>